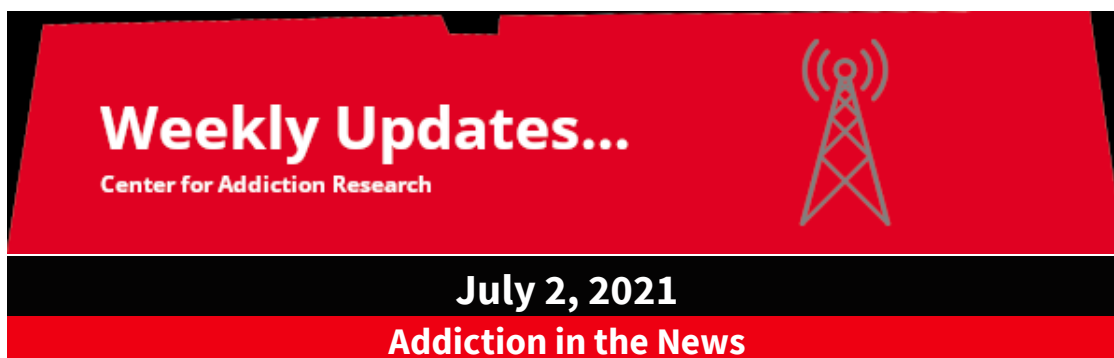


UC CAR Weekly Newsletter 7.2.2021

Welcome to the weekly newsletter from the Center for Addiction Research! Each newsletter includes highlights from addiction in the news topics, active funding opportunities offered by NIDA/NIAAA, and information about any new publications from CAR members. Please email Jen Rowe (roweji@ucmail.uc.edu) to change your communication preferences. Thank you.

Thank you for your interest in the Center for Addiction Research - our mission is to accelerate scientific progress in the prevention and treatment of substance use disorders and their consequences by fostering research collaborations across: 1) UC departments, colleges, and centers including Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center; 2) Local, regional, and state community and governmental partners; and 3) Other academic institutions and industry."



UC/ Regional News

Research shows UC screening program contributes to increase in HIV diagnoses UC News 6/30/2021 **(Featuring CAR Member, Dr. Lyons)**

Newly published research shows that a screening program in the University of Cincinnati Medical Center Emergency Department helped detect an outbreak of HIV among persons who inject drugs in Hamilton County, Ohio, from 2014-18 (publication information included below in today's newsletter). The results of the study highlight UC contributions to public health surveillance as yet another reason why emergency departments should be screening for undiagnosed HIV infections, according to Michael Lyons, MD, associate professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine at the UC College of Medicine. "The importance of emergency department screening has been...

The rising threat of fentanyl in Montgomery County

DAYTON, Ohio (WKEF)--There's an alarming new push to distribute Narcan throughout the Greater Dayton Area. Montgomery County Sheriff Rob Streck says that almost 150 people have overdosed this year, as the cartel is now mixing fentanyl into not just opioids, but all different kinds of drugs. I met Josh Harrell when I went to West Dayton's 4505 & 4502 zip codes, it's an area that advocates say is one of the overdose hot spots in Montgomery County. Harrel told...

Opioid Overdose Deaths Surging In Lorain County

AVON LAKE, OH — Opioid overdose deaths are on the rise in Lorain County. Between January and April 2021, there was a 20-percent increase in reported opioid overdoses, the Lorain County Public Health Department announced. There has also been an increase in fentanyl seized in Lorain County during that same time period. Based on the county health department's data, an opioid-related overdose death happens every 2.5 days in Lorain County. Family, friends and coworkers...

National News

Even A Pandemic Can't Stop Teens' Alcohol And Marijuana Use.

[Medscape](#) (6/29, Subscription Publication, 219K) reports, “Despite record-breaking decreases in perceived availability of alcohol and marijuana among 12th-grade students, their use of these substances did not change significantly during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to two surveys conducted in 2020.” However, vaping “did not show the same pattern.” National Institute on Drug Abuse Director Nora Volkow said in a separate statement, “It is striking that, despite this monumental shift and teens’ perceived decreases in availability of marijuana and alcohol, usage rates held steady for these substances.” The [findings](#) were published in Drug and Alcohol Dependence.

UN Report Says 36M Out Of 275M People Who Used Drugs Worldwide In 2020 Suffered From Drug Use Disorders.

The [AP](#) (6/24) reports that over 36 million out of the 275 million people who used drugs worldwide in 2020 “suffered from drug use disorders, according to the World Drug Report released Thursday by the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime in Vienna.” According to the article, “The report also said many countries saw a rise in the use of cannabis during the coronavirus pandemic.”

DIA:

Pfizer Halts Distribution Of Anti-Smoking Drug Varenicline After Finding Carcinogen

[STAT](#) (6/24, Silverman) reports, “After finding potential carcinogens in some lots of Chantix [varenicline], Pfizer late last month halted worldwide distribution of” its oral smoking cessation drug. The company, “which is now running tests, took this step after finding nitrosamine levels that were above an ‘acceptable’ daily intake,” and “consequently, regulators in Canada and South Korea, for instance, have posted recall notices for the medicine.”

New Biden Administration Rule Relaxes Restrictions On Methadone Vans.

The [Pittsburgh Post-Gazette](#) (6/28, Moore, 426K) reports, “Biden administration health officials, including former Pennsylvania Health Secretary Rachel Levine, announced a final rule on Monday that eases long-standing restrictions on mobile methadone clinics that can reach rural and under-served communities that may not

have a brick-and-mortar drug treatment facility.” Levine, who is now HHS assistant secretary for health, said, “DEA’s new rule will streamline the registration process to make it easier for registrants to provide needed services to under-served parts of the country.” This “change, carried out by the Drug Enforcement Agency, allows federally registered treatment programs to add a mobile clinic to their services without seeking a separate DEA license for the vans.” The change “comes as the nation records a surge in overdose deaths, reaching more than 92,700 people in the last year, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.”

The [Washington Times](#) (6/28, Zantow, 626K) reports that according to Levine, “the change is ‘extremely critical.’” She added, “This alarming increase in overdose deaths underlines the need for more accessible treatment services.”

Several States Legalize Fentanyl Test Strips To Help Save Lives.

[Fox News](#) (6/25, Bennett, 23.99M). “Across the country, more states are beginning to legalize drug testing strips that can detect the presence of the potent opioid Fentanyl to avoid deadly overdoses. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, fentanyl is 50 to 100 times more potent than morphine and is typically used to manage severe pain specifically after a surgery. While it’s legally prescribed, it’s also being sold and distributed on the black market.”

Fentanyl-Related Deaths In Montana Doubled From 2019 To 2020.

The [Billings \(MT\) Gazette](#) (6/28, Michels, 179K) reports, “Fentanyl-related deaths in Montana doubled from 2019 to 2020 and this year’s deaths have already outpaced the tally from two years ago.” The state recorded “41 fentanyl-related deaths last year, a dramatic jump from 19 in 2019.”

St. Louis Dealing With Rising Drug Overdoses In Black Communities.

The [AP](#) (6/24, Galofaro) reports, “The portrait of the opioid epidemic has long been painted as a rural white affliction, but the demographics have been shifting for years as deaths surged among Black Americans,” with deaths among Black people in St. Louis increasing “last year at three times the rate of white people, skyrocketing more than 33%. Black men in Missouri are now four times more likely than a white person to die of an overdose.” According to the AP, “Dr. Kanika Turner, a local physician leading the charge to contain the crisis, describes the soaring death rate as a civil rights issue as pressing and profound as any other.”

Calls To Michigan EMS For Overdoses Up 13% In 2021.

The [Detroit Free Press](#) (6/24, Kovanis, 2.16M) reports, “The number of EMS runs for opioid overdoses has increased again this year, according to new data provided by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.” Provisional data from CDC show “a 13.4% increase in overdoses year over year. Most of them are opioid-related.”

Opioid Deaths Increasing In Connecticut, Partly Due To Pandemic.

The AP (6/27) reports “opioid deaths spiked in Connecticut during the pandemic and continue to increase in 2021, fueled by continued disruptions to recovery programs and a deadly, fentanyl-laced drug supply.” Fentanyl “was found in 4 percent of accidental intoxication deaths in the state in 2012 but showed up in the vast majority of fatal overdoses last year,” the Hartford Courant reported.” The isolation worsened “by the pandemic led to more drug use, more emergency room visits and more overdoses.”

Indivior Raises Revenue, Profit Forecast As Opioid Addiction Treatment Sales Remain Strong.

Reuters (6/30, Aripaka) reports “Indivior Plc on Wednesday raised its annual revenue and profit forecast, encouraged by strong sales of its opioid addiction treatments in the first half of the year as patients resumed routine visits to clinics and hospitals, sending its shares 10.5% higher in early trade.” Indivior “now expects full-year net revenue between \$705 million and \$740 million, to account for growth in its injectable opioid addiction treatment, Sublocade [buprenorphine], and steady sales of its top-selling medicine, Suboxone [buprenorphine and naloxone].”

West Virginia Judge Grants Request To Stop Law Tightening Requirements On Needle Exchange Programs.

The AP (6/28, Raby) reports, “A judge in West Virginia has granted a group’s request to stop a law tightening requirements on needle exchange programs from being implemented next month.” The organization, “the American Civil Liberties Union’s West Virginia chapter, filed a federal lawsuit last week.”

The Hill (6/28, Choi, 5.69M) reports that critics believe the law “would have restricted access to clean needles as the state deals with a spike in HIV cases.” Many “public health experts agree that clean needle exchange programs are one of the most effective methods of preventing the spread of the disease among people who use intravenous drugs.”

HIV Tests Rare In Medical Settings Among West Virginia Drug Users, CDC Says.

The AP (6/24, Raby) reports preliminary findings by the CDC show “emergency departments and inpatient medical personnel rarely conducted HIV testing on intravenous drug users in a West Virginia county with one of the nation’s highest spikes in such cases.” The CDC investigation “was done to assess behaviors and attitudes of people who inject drugs as well as community stakeholders.” It also “examined access and barriers to services and analyzed HIV contact tracing procedures and other data.”

Biden Prioritizing “Harm-Reduction” Drug Policy.

The [New York Times](#) (6/27, A1, Goodnough, 20.6M) reports on its front page that with the US reopening from the pandemic, President Biden “has made expanding harm-reduction efforts one of his drug policy priorities – the first president to do so.” The Times adds that while the \$30 million included in the American Rescue Act “specifically for evidence-based harm reduction services” is “modest,” it is “a victory for the programs, both symbolically and practically, as they often run on shoestring budgets.”

The COVID Pandemic’s Lingering Impact On Clinical Trials.

[Nature](#) (6/28, Ledford, 194K) reports, “Medical researchers are beginning to shift their focus away from COVID-19 – but the pandemic could continue to affect studies focused on other diseases.” NCI Cancer Therapy Evaluation Program Associate Director Meg Mooney said, “COVID-19 taught us that there’s a lot more flexibility in the clinical trials system than we realized. ... But when you lose time, you lose time. It’s going to delay results.” Between March and May 2020, “trial [enrollments] plummeted at many medical centres as prospective participants shied away from risky trips to [the] hospital, and research staff were either furloughed or co-opted to aid hospitals’ COVID-19 treatment efforts.” During that time, “researchers worked hard to keep trials that were deemed as ‘life-saving’ open, [Emilia Bagiella, clinical trial statistician at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai,] says.” Despite these efforts, “enrollment in clinical trials run by the SWOG Cancer Research Network, a large clinical-trials programme funded by the NCI, dropped by about half between March and May 2020.”

Funding Opportunities



GRANTS & FUNDING

NIH Central Resource for Grants and Funding Information

[PAR-21-275](#)

[The Role of Work in Health Disparities in the U.S. \(R01 Clinical Trials Optional\)](#)

[NOT-AA-21-029](#)

[Notice of Special Interest: Genetics of Alcohol Sensitivity and Tolerance](#)

[NOT-AG-21-018](#)

[Notice of Special Interest: Alzheimers-Focused Administrative Supplements for NIH Grants that are Not Focused on Alzheimers Disease](#)

[NOT-AI-21-057](#)

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\) HIV/AIDS in the Era of COVID-19: When Pandemics Collide](#)

[RFA-DA-22-029](#)

[Exploratory Studies to Investigate the Mechanisms of Interrelationship between Sleep and Substance Use Disorders \(R61/R33 Basic Experimental Studies with Humans Required\)](#)

[NOT-OD-21-127](#)

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems \(ENDS\) and Alternative Nicotine and Tobacco Delivery Systems: Basic Mechanisms of Health Effects](#)

[NOT-OD-21-137](#)

[Notice of Special Interest \(NOSI\): Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems \(ENDS\) and Alternative Nicotine and Tobacco Delivery Systems: Population, Clinical and Applied Prevention Mechanisms of Health Effects](#)

CAR Member New Publications

“HIV detection by an emergency department HIV screening program during a regional outbreak among people who inject drugs” Kiran A. Faryar , Rachel M.

Ancona, Zachary Reau, Sheryl B. Lyss, Robert S. Braun, Todd Rademaker, Ryane K. Sickles, Michael S. Lyons

Journal PLOS ONE,

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0251756>

ABSTRACT

Objective: Multiple HIV outbreaks among persons who inject drugs (PWID) have occurred in the US since 2015. Emergency departments (EDs), recognized as essential venues for HIV screening, may play a unique role in identifying undiagnosed HIV among PWID, who frequently present for complications of injection drug use (IDU). Our objective was to describe changes in HIV diagnoses among PWID detected by an ED HIV screening program and estimate the program’s contribution to HIV diagnoses among PWID county-wide during the emergence of a regional HIV outbreak.

Methods: This was a retrospective study of electronically queried clinical records from an urban, safety-net ED’s HIV screening program and publicly available HIV surveillance data for its surrounding county, Hamilton County, Ohio. Outcomes included the change in number of HIV diagnoses and the ED’s contribution to case identification county-wide, overall and for PWID during 2014–2018.

Results: During 2014–2018, the annual number of HIV diagnoses made by the ED program increased from 20 to 42 overall, and from 1 to 18 for PWID. We estimated that the ED contributed 18% of HIV diagnoses in the county and 22% of diagnoses among PWID.

Conclusions: The ED program contributed 1 in 5 new HIV diagnoses among PWID county-wide, further illustrating the importance of ED HIV screening programs in identifying undiagnosed HIV infections. In areas experiencing increasing IDU, HIV screening in EDs can provide an early indication of increasing HIV diagnoses among PWID and can substantially contribute to case-finding during an HIV outbreak.

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